



ASSET PROFILE

Issue Area: Housing

Cluster 8 residents are passionate about their residential neighborhoods, as clearly evidenced by the number of active Community Development Corporations and long-established neighborhood associations that share the goal of maintaining caring, safe communities attractive to families and seniors. This passion for enhancing the quality of all neighborhoods is evidenced in the priority given to the reinvestment recommendations for housing. The top three recommendations are policy-based, representing general principles in pursuit of a specific goal. They address the ultimate goal of enhanced neighborhood quality and the quality of life for the cluster. The recommendations speak to the need to advocate for more responsive city service delivery, promote new housing development that replaces lost housing stock in the Brightmoor and Redford subcommunities, and expediting land acquisition for future housing development. To form a basis for these recommendations, the following section provides an overview of the cluster, a discussion of current conditions/assets, and highlights new housing development. See subcommunity map next page for boundaries.

Housing Overview

According to the 1990 Census, Cluster 8 has a total of 36,200 housing units divided among four diverse subcommunities (see Subcommunity Map page 63), each having its own housing characteristics, conditions, assets, and opportunities. Sixty percent (21,677) of the homes are owner-occupied and 94 percent are occupied units. (See Housing Ownership Map on page 71). Rosedale Park, Evergreen, and Redford have stable housing in good to excellent condition with escalating selling prices. In contrast, at the southern part of the cluster is Brightmoor, where 50 percent of the homes are in need of repair, and an additional 25 percent of the housing structures are vacant. This community presents an opportunity for stakeholders to take advantage of revitalization programs such as HUD's *Homeownership Zone* program that helps turn blighted urban areas into thriving neighborhoods. The Homeownership Zone program implements concepts of the "New Urbanism," a type of urban planning that makes the neighborhood the focal point of planning and development. The New Urbanism principles that are promoted by HUD and its partners in the program include: defined neighborhoods of limited size; flexible zoning standards to allow a mix of compatible uses, along with a mix of housing styles and levels of income; public parks and gathering space; preservation of the historic character; mass transit connections; and pedestrian-friendly streets and walkways connecting the neighborhoods to the surrounding area.



Presently, existing side by side and coming together in Cluster 8 are older communities with a tradition of stability and character and new communities looking for new identities. Although the challenges are many, each subcommunity in Cluster 8 has its own assets and opportunities for community reinvestment and rebuilding.

One significant asset and opportunity is the contribution of Community Development Corporations which are often the driving force behind housing and neighborhood development. These community-based organizations garner the capital necessary to create attractive, affordable, and compatible housing that complements existing homes. Cluster 8 CDCs are strong and committed to both neighborhood development and stabilization. Some work to build affordable housing thereby encouraging home ownership, while others work to renovate vacant houses before they deteriorate and become vacant lots. The discussion of current and new housing includes examples of the work of Cluster 8 CDCs.

The housing conditions survey conducted by data gatherers was designed to capture current housing conditions in the cluster. (See Housing Condition Map on page 70.) The block-by-block survey required surveyors to rate the block using a scale of one to four with a rating of four indicating major deterioration. The results of the survey have been mapped and indicate that the majority of the housing in the cluster is in stable condition. However, the Brightmoor subcommunity, census tracts 5435, 5436, 5437, and 5438, are in states of major deterioration. See housing condition map at end of section.

Current Housing Conditions

Rosedale Subcommunity

Boundaries: The Rosedale Park subcommunity is bounded by McNichols, the Southfield Fwy., Schoolcraft, Grandville, Lyndon, Kentfield, Fielding, Puritan, and Lahser. The area has a total of 6,801 housing units, with 86 percent owner-occupied. **Housing Units:** The total population is 19,985, with a household median income of \$43,327 (1990 Census). There are 6,801 housing units in the area. It is an area of primarily large, two-story brick single-family homes in good to excellent condition. Lot sizes are significantly larger than in most other parts of the city, where densities are less than 12 units per acre. **Assets:** Within this community, North Rosedale Park stands out as a neighborhood with several distinguishing qualities. North Rosedale Park is a neighborhood of about 1,700 spacious homes built primarily in the late 1920s and early 1930s. The homes boast such amenities as leaded-glass windows, fine woodwork, hardwood floors, and wet plaster walls. In the past year, prices of houses in Rosedale Park have jumped in value by \$40,000 to \$60,000, turning what would have been a \$90,000 sale into a \$150,000



transaction in some cases. North Rosedale Park is the only neighborhood in the city of Detroit with its own private six-acre park and community house, which was built in 1939. The park surrounding the community house is owned and maintained by the North Rosedale Park Civic Association. It is the center of many activities such as baseball, soccer, and iceskating.

Brightmoor Subcommunity

Boundaries: The Brightmoor subcommunity is bounded by Puritan, Fielding, Fenkell, Kentfield, Lyndon, Grandville, Schoolcraft, the Southfield Fwy., the Jeffries Fwy., the western city limits, Fenkell, and Lahser. **Housing Units:** This community has 7,201 housing units with 41 percent owner-occupied. The total population is 19,042, with a household median income of \$16,010 (1990 Census). The area is developed primarily with single-family homes that are presently in fair to poor condition. Boarded-up houses and homes in need of major repair can be found throughout the area, as can vacant lots. This community has a major city park in the western sector, Eliza Howell, developed along the Rouge River Valley. The city-owned Smith Homes public housing complex is located at Lyndon and Evergreen, and is presently undergoing major renovation. **Assets:** The Brightmoor community has made progress over the last year toward improving the housing stock and stopping blight. Burned-out houses have been demolished (see City of Detroit Demolition Process following this section), lots have been cleared, and new construction can be seen going up in this community. Strong community participation is the key to revitalization. Community groups, such as the Trinity Community Development Center, have made a commitment to the revitalization of the surrounding area of Brightmoor. The Center proposes to develop new homes, townhouses, and to rehabilitate commercial establishments in the project area.

Brightmoor presents major opportunities for infill housing (infill housing is the practice of building homes in empty lots adjacent to existing houses) and commercial development.

The Fannie Mae Corporation has recently partnered with the city of Detroit and mortgage lenders, non-profits, developers, realtors, and other housing partners to increase home ownership opportunities in Detroit. HouseDetroit offers home buyers low down payment mortgages, below-market interest rate mortgages, rent-to-own options, loans to purchase two-family homes, and loans for home improvements. HouseDetroit, a potential "shot in the arm" for housing rehabilitation and home improvement in Brightmoor, could benefit from community-based partnerships to help promote the programs. The Brightmoor Community Center would serve as a likely partner. The Center has played a key role in helping to revitalize the community. The Center is a major coordinator of minor home repair and emergency repair programs west of Greenfield.



Brightmoor community block clubs and neighborhood groups have worked with United Way Community Services through a community building planning process, begun in April 1996, to develop a neighborhood plan. The “Bright Futures for Brightmoor” neighborhood plan, once approved, will encourage the use of a variety of community assets, primarily the strength, capacity, and resources of the residents and those of local businesses, institutions, and neighborhood associations to create strong neighborhoods. The plan will guide community participation in the physical as well as social development of the community and its neighborhoods.

Community building, a major national trend, combines the best practices of community organizing and economic development to rebuild human capital and self-sufficiency. Many see it as one solution to revitalizing urban neighborhoods. A variety of models and projects abound throughout the country; most rely heavily upon community development corporations (CDCs).

Evergreen Subcommunity

Boundaries: The Evergreen subcommunity is bounded by Eight Mile Rd., Southfield Fwy., McNichols Rd., and Lahser. **Housing Units:** The area has 12,184 housing units, with 68 percent owner-occupied. The total population is 35,470, with a household median income of \$30,090 (1990 census). The area is developed with primarily single-family homes, most built after World War II. The Cluster 8 housing condition survey/map indicate that generally, present housing conditions are good to excellent. **Assets:** This community includes several of Detroit’s most popular neighborhoods for raising children. O’Hair Memorial Park, one of Detroit’s largest parks, is located east of Evergreen and adjacent to Henry Ford High, one of the two high schools in Cluster 8. The park is used by the high school for football and by the residents for soccer. It has a nature trail that has been identified and dedicated April 22, 1997, by the Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, as “Pitcher Woods.” The park was given a facelift with a nature trail and new signs identifying the plants. The future of this neighborhood is as a residential community, with stabilized, attractive commercial areas balanced with the needs of the surrounding neighborhoods. A key organization working toward this future is New Hope Community Development Non-Profit Housing Corporation.

Redford Subcommunity

Boundaries: The Redford subcommunity is bounded by Eight Mile Rd., Lahser, Fenkell, Dale, Puritan, and Five Points. **Housing Units:** This community has 10,014 housing units, with 57 percent owner-occupied. The total population is 23,443, with a household median income of \$27,300 (1990 Census). This area is developed primarily with single-family homes in generally good to excellent condition. **Assets:** The Rouge River winds through



this community from Eight Mile Rd. on the north to its southern boundary, Fenkell. The problems plaguing residents living around the river have been seasonal flooding and mosquito infestation. While land use along the river is limited to recreational use, it has been recommended to target as a potential job center, creating employment opportunities. Unemployed residents of the community could be employed to cleanup the overgrown vegetation and build barriers against flooding. Once cleaned, the river could become a place for nature trails and walkways. The annual Rouge River cleanup, coordinated by the Brightmoor Community Center, brings residents and local resources to tackle this tremendous problem.

Consistent with this land use, two major golf courses are located in this community. The Bonnie Brook, located on Shiawassee between Berg Rd. and Eight Mile Rd., is an 18-hole (4,042 yds. ~ par 61) public course. Rogell Golf Course, located south of Seven Mile between Berg and Lahser, is the largest 18-hole public course in the city of Detroit (6,932 yds. ~ par 72). Although very little housing development has occurred in the area, the community has witnessed the development of the former Edgewater Park site through the building of Ellis Manor Apartment for Seniors.

New Housing Development

Westwood Park

Westwood Park, near Schoolcraft and Evergreen, is an example of new neighborhoods being created through new housing developments. Stoepel Park I, the only boundary separating this area from the solid Rosedale Park area, has also been identified for improvements by the Piston Palace Foundation's PARK Program. Habitat for Humanity, Motor City Blight Busters, Northwest Detroit Neighborhood Development, and Northwest Detroit Non-Profit Housing have jointly built the houses in this newly developing area. The '97 Blitz Build was funded with nearly \$2 million in cash and in-kind donations from businesses. The Northwest Detroit Neighborhood Development group has demolished 48 dangerous buildings and renovated 24 homes since it was founded in 1989. The group has also constructed ten new homes which are priced near \$63,000. A separate development planned by the Northwest Detroit Neighborhood Development Group is for a \$5 million 50-home project. The target area is bounded by Kentfield, Burt, Schoolcraft and Outer Drive. The effects of these projects can be seen on the surrounding area, as many residents are now revitalizing, installing siding, laying new driveways and taking better care of their property. The buildings are only a part of a "new" neighborhood. Habitat For Humanity has homeowner classes focusing on things such as home maintenance and the importance of forming relationships with neighborhoods. Block clubs are forming in Westwood Park, and residents plan a 24-hour patrol.



Smith Homes

This development is a federally subsidized housing project for low-income families operated by the City of Detroit Housing Commission and currently undergoing a major \$11.6 million renovation. Smith Homes is located west of Evergreen and south of Lyndon in the Brightmoor community. The two-phase design plan has been under way since May 31, 1996, and is scheduled for completion in May 1999. The design for building renovations includes the demolition of 11 tenant buildings and the total modernization of 162 units in 51 buildings. A community building being constructed under a separate contract will be located near the west side of the Smith Homes townhouse development property. The community center will provide a place for social activities, tenant council meetings, unit and ground's maintenance, an exercise room, and a police mini-station. A glass-enclosed walkway, approximately 60 feet long, is being proposed to extend from the north wall of the community building and connect to the southeast corner of a gym building with locker rooms, equipment storage, and support offices. In addition, the surrounding grounds will be fully landscaped with walkways, a jogging path, an outdoor basketball court, and a tot play lot. The reintegration of public housing into a revitalized neighborhood is a goal of this community (Detroit Master Plan).

Trinity Community Redevelopment Project

The Trinity project site is located in the Brightmoor community and is bounded by Fenkell to the north, Pierson to the east, Blackstone to the west and W. Outer Drive to the south. The Trinity Community Development Center, Inc., has made a commitment to revitalize this section of the community. The goal and vision of this project, as proposed in the preliminary site plan (Madison International - August 15, 1997), is to develop a sound residential density pattern neighborhood plan. The plan includes low-density single-family homes, utilizing cul-de-sac and landscaping to minimize through vehicular traffic. It also includes townhouses and multifamily housing located at the edges of the single-family units, in proximity to the major thoroughfares like Fenkell or W. Outer Drive for easy access to needed services. This project presents an opportunity to connect with existing revitalization initiatives in the area and add to the emerging "cityscape" of this community.

Hope Park

The Hope Park planning area is a 42-square block neighborhood bounded by Grand River to the north, Burt Rd. to the east, Fenkell to the south, and Lahser Rd. to the west. The housing stock is largely depressed, in disrepair and abandonment and has a median house value of \$21,900. This neighborhood is generally a low-income area, with a median household income of \$15,370, compared to the overall Brightmoor community median income of \$16,010 (1990 Census). The vision for revitalizing this neighborhood is driven



by the Hope Park Association, which was organized in 1991 against blight, crime, and housing deterioration . One outstanding asset of this neighborhood is the Hope Playfield located in close proximity to the Crowell Recreation Center. The Association has cleaned and mowed over 20 city-owned vacant lots and has turned four of these into the Hope Playfield (mini-park). This neighborhood presents a strong sense of community and is planning for 75 new homes in 1998.

New Hope

Housing redevelopment and renovation in this community has been largely driven by the New Hope Non-Profit Housing Corporation, which was founded in 1990 to create and implement a strategic plan for revitalizing a six-square mile area. New Hope's goals are to stabilize and promote a vital community for existing homeowners and to provide affordable housing for first-time buyers. New Hope buys houses in the target area (bounded by Southfield, Telegraph, Eight Mile and Six Mile rds.), renovates, and sells them to qualified individuals of moderate and low income who have completed the New Hope Buyer Training Program. The program educates participants about types of mortgages, credit repair, budgeting and saving money, maintaining a house, and community participation. New Hope house sales range from \$20,000 to \$60,000. Some homes have income restrictions. In the spring of 1997, New Hope completed work on several additional houses, bringing the total to 16 completed homes acquired and rehabilitated. Presently, New Hope has plans for new housing in the Longacre subdivision bounded by Vassar, Pembroke, Evergreen and Stout.

Ellis Manor

Development began in 1994 on the Edgewater Park site by the Greater Grace Church of Detroit and is currently completed. Ellis Manor is a \$5 million senior citizens mid-rise that occupies approximately six acres of land. The one residential building has 89 units on three floors and offers residents such amenities as a hair salon, library, community room, arts and crafts, ping-pong, and other activities. The surrounding area is wooded, which serves as a buffer and provides residents with a sense of security while limiting traffic flow. See potential housing sites maps in Section IV.